

# U.S. POLICY CONSIDERATIONS IN TIBET

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HEARING  
BEFORE THE  
COMMITTEE ON  
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH CONGRESS  
SECOND SESSION

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## U.S. POLICY CONSIDERATIONS IN TIBET

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THURSDAY, MARCH 7, 2002

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The Committee met, pursuant to call, at 11:20 a.m. in Room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Henry J. Hyde (Chairman of the Committee) presiding.

Chairman HYDE. The Committee will be in order.

Of the many infamous episodes in the century just past, one that still echoes is the statement by the British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain in which he publicly washed his hands of involvement in what he termed “a quarrel in a far away country between people of whom we know nothing.”

With that statement, Chamberlain ensured that he, his country, and the world would pay a price immeasurably greater than any he was capable of imagining. We have since learned there are no countries that are sufficiently far enough away that we can safely ignore what happens within them, nor are there people so insignificant that we can rightly dismiss them from our consideration. It is with these thoughts in mind that we have convened today’s hearing on Tibet.

The United States Government recognizes Tibet to be a part of China. It is not the purpose of this hearing to dispute that position. But that recognition does not imply that the people of Tibet—indeed, all peoples—do not possess a fundamental right to live their lives as they see fit without persecution.

We—and the world—will continue to voice our concerns regarding conditions in Tibet and to press for the resolution of current and future disputes in a manner that promotes true interests of the people of Tibet as they themselves define those interests. To do so is not interference; it is our duty.

That being said, there are many issues regarding Tibet that evoke great concern on our part. First among these are reports of continuing and widespread human rights abuses, including arbitrary arrests, detention without public trial, and the use of torture. Many of these acts are focused on Tibetans attempting to preserve their religious, cultural, and linguistic heritage. I note with dismay that freedom of religion remains narrowly circumscribed in Tibet. Government repression extends to the direct persecution of believers, the arrest and abuse of monks and nuns, and the outright prohibition of many religious observances. In addition to the limitations imposed on the general population, monasteries and convents have been singled out for even tighter constraints, with comprehen-

sive political controls of their operations and functions made even more onerous by forced political indoctrination.

Unfortunately, as we have seen, these abuses are not limited to Tibet. Unapproved religious activity is severely repressed throughout China. But the situation in Tibet is particularly acute, due to the authorities' fear that free religious expression may encourage political activism and Tibetan nationalism.

Our concerns are only magnified by the lack of reliable information emerging from Tibet, a problem stemming directly from the Chinese government's longstanding policy of limiting communication between Tibet and the outside world. Deprived of direct access, we have little recourse but to believe the many credible reports coming out of Tibet of continued repression and of human rights abuses. If the Chinese government desires to refute these charges, the most effective means of doing so would be to remove these restrictions and allow unhindered access to, and communication with, Tibet.

The list I have outlined is not meant to be an exhaustive one, but it does serve as an indication of the range and depth of our concerns. To these, let me add one other subject: the plight of the Tibetan refugees in India, Nepal, and elsewhere. This unfortunate population has been estimated to number 100,000, and is still growing as others make their way out of Tibet. We should bear in mind that even as we remain rightly concerned about the people within Tibet, we must remember our own responsibilities to those Tibetans who have been forced to flee their homeland.

How might we best use our influence? By keeping the world's attention directed to Tibet and by demonstrating our abiding interest in that region's affairs, great and small. The authorities in Beijing must be made to understand these issues cannot be relegated to the penumbra of our relations with China, but instead will always occupy a central place.

Our goal is not confrontation. Instead, our efforts are entirely pacific and have as their only objective assisting the people of Tibet to secure the right to live their lives in freedom. Our hope is that we may yet contribute to a just and lasting solution.

It is my pleasure to yield to Thomas Lantos, the Gentleman from California, and the Senior Democrat on the Committee.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Hyde follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE HENRY J. HYDE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, AND CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Of the many infamous episodes in the century just past, one that still echoes is the statement by British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain in which he publicly washed his hands of involvement in what he termed "a quarrel in a far away country between people of whom we know nothing." With that statement, Chamberlain ensured that he, his country, and the world would pay a price immeasurably greater than any he was capable of imagining.

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Unfortunately, as we have seen, these abuses are not limited to Tibet. Unapproved religious activity is severely repressed throughout China. But the situation in Tibet is particularly acute, due to the authorities' fear that free religious expression may encourage political activism and Tibetan nationalism.

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How might we best use our influence? By keeping the world's attention directed to Tibet and by demonstrating our abiding interest in that region's affairs, great and small. The authorities in Beijing must be made to understand that these issues cannot be relegated to the penumbra of our relations with China but instead will always occupy a central place. Our goal is not confrontation. Instead, our efforts are entirely pacific and have as their only objective assisting the people of Tibet to secure the right to live their lives in freedom. Our hope is that we may yet contribute to a just and lasting solution.

Mr. LANTOS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. And before I make some opening remarks, I would like to welcome the Tibetan monks who have graced this hearing. We welcome you. We are honored to have you.

Mr. Chairman, I would first like to commend you for calling today's hearing on U.S. policy considerations vis-a-vis Tibet. I greatly appreciate your willingness to tackle one of the most troubling and vexing human rights issues facing the world today, and I would like to put this hearing on Tibet in a global context. Yesterday Chairman Biden of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Jesse Helms, the ranking Republican, and you and I had a meeting at the White House with the President, the Vice President, the national security advisor, basically to talk about our global war against terrorism.

Today's hearing is a litmus test of whether this free and open and decent society is capable of undertaking two very different missions simultaneously: Conduct the war against international terrorism, which we must, on a united and bipartisan and long-term basis as long as it takes to eradicate international terrorism. We do not wish a repetition of September 11. But at the same time be

true to our values and principles of human rights and the dignity that every individual and every group is entitled to.

In 3 days, Mr. Chairman, we will mark the 43rd anniversary of the Tibetan uprising when the people of Tibet fought with incredible courage against overwhelming odds in the brutal Chinese invasion. The March 10th anniversary is a reminder to every civilized person on this planet that the Tibetan people will continue their efforts to win control over their own destiny 43 years after that tragic event.

Mr. Chairman, the struggle of the Tibetan people and their leader, His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, has been very lonely at times. In 1987, my wife, Annette, and I invited His Holiness to address the Congressional Human Rights Caucus. No leader of Congress was willing to meet with the Dalai Lama. We couldn't get near the State Department, let alone the White House. We met in a small conference room. And in his speech to a handful of us, His Holiness made a major policy statement expressing his desire to work peacefully with Beijing to regain for the Tibetan people their cultural autonomy.

The Congressional Human Rights Caucus for 20 years now has been attempting to deal with the subject of Tibet. His Holiness's presentation of his peace plan gave great hope to the people of Tibet that their plight has some resonance in the United States, and that the United States Congress recognized the enormous contributions made by His Holiness.

For the last 15 years, the picture has improved dramatically. While our initial meeting was rather small and unimpressive, shortly after that breaking of the ice, the bipartisan Congressional leadership welcomed His Holiness in the Capitol Rotunda. We had a magnificent recognition of this great moral leader.

Then came meetings with the Department of State, the Vice President, the President. And the process culminated when my friend, Richard Gere, and I were guests of Larry King discussing Tibet and the Dalai Lama.

On May 9th of last year, my California colleague, Senator Feinstein, the former Chairman of this Committee, Ben Gilman of New York, Representative Mark Kirk of Illinois, and I introduced the first piece of comprehensive Tibet legislation since the invasion of Tibet.

Mr. Chairman, I am delighted to report to you that today we added our 100th co-sponsor of that critically important piece of legislation. The depth of bipartisan support for the bill demonstrates how far the Tibetan people have come in winning international support for their just cause.

I am also delighted by the fact that we have begun work on a conference to the State Department authorization bill, and hopefully we will see the Tibetan Policy Act signed into law in the near future as part of that larger piece of legislation.

Our legislation, the Tibetan Policy Act, will promote human rights and religious freedom, provide assistance to the Tibetan people, and ensure that development sponsored by international institutions benefits the people of Tibet.

The legislation is detailed, it is comprehensive, and it will advance the aspirations of the Tibetan people.

Mr. Chairman, it is very easy to be pessimistic about Tibet's future. The Chinese military keeps tight control over Tibet. Buddhist monks and nuns are forced to renounce their allegiance to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, or face long prison terms and torture.

And, perhaps most importantly, the Chinese government has so far refused to engage in a meaningful dialogue with His Holiness the Dalai Lama or his representative on the future of Tibet.

But I believe, Mr. Chairman, there is more reason for optimism. The international pressure on the Chinese leadership to provide genuine autonomy for the Tibetan people, of which our legislation is an important part, is steadily increasing.

A new generation of Chinese leaders will take over next year, and we hope that they will recognize that it will only add to the greatness of Chinese culture and civilization if they recognize the legitimate rights of the Tibetan people. The Tibetan people must control their own religious and cultural autonomy.

I wanted to say, Mr. Chairman, that we have at the witness table three personal friends of mine who have fought indefatigably for the people of Tibet and for human rights in general, and I look forward to the pleasure of your introduction.

Chairman HYDE. Thank you, Mr. Lantos. To the other Members of the Committee, if they have opening statements, I would appreciate it if they would file them for the record and let us get to the witnesses.

So without objection, any further opening statements will be made a part of the record.

I would like to welcome once again Dr. Paula Dobriansky. Prior to her appointment as Under Secretary of State for Global Affairs, Dr. Dobriansky served as Senior Vice President and Director of the Washington office of the Council on Foreign Relations. Previously she served as Senior International Affairs and Trade Advisor at the law firm of Hunton & Williams, and as Co-Chair of the International TV Council at the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. She has served on various boards, including the Western NIS Enterprise Fund, National Endowment for Democracy, Freedom House, American Council of Young Political Leaders, the American Bar Association's Central and East European Law Initiative, and the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy.

Welcome, Madam Under Secretary. I kindly ask that you summarize your statement around 5 minutes, give or take, and your full statement will be placed in the hearing records. So please proceed.

**STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE PAULA DOBRIANSKY,  
UNDER SECRETARY, OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY  
FOR GLOBAL AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE**

Ms. DOBRIANSKY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Members of the Committee. I am delighted to appear before you today to testify on U.S. Policy considerations in Tibet. I will summarize my statement and submit my full text for the record.

I truly appreciate the interest and support Members of this Committee have provided on this issue. I would also like to thank the Dalai Lama's special envoy, Lodi Gyari, the International Campaign for Tibet, the myriad of experts, including Richard Gere who

is with us here today, and nongovernmental organizations that have met with me over the past year.

I was appointed 10 months ago to serve as Special Coordinator for Tibetan issues, concurrently with my portfolio as Under Secretary for Global Affairs. The U.S. Government's policy goals are two-fold; first, to promote a substantive dialogue between the Chinese government and the Dalai Lama or his representatives, and second, to help sustain Tibet's unique religious, linguistic and cultural heritage.

Mr. Chairman, as you and your colleagues know, disputes over Tibet's relations with the Chinese government have a long complex history dating back centuries. Rather than focus my testimony on the distant past, I would like to describe the current circumstances in Tibet, highlighting key developments over the past year, and the areas on which I have focused on since my appointment.

The current situation on the ground in Tibet, as both of you have described, Mr. Chairman and Congressman Lantos, remains grave. The State Department's *Annual Human Rights Report for 2001* in the section on China clearly states that the tight controls on religion and other fundamental freedoms remain serious problems. The report describes in detail widespread human rights and religious freedom abuses, including instances of arbitrary arrests, detention without public trial, torture in prison and official controls over Tibetan monasteries and institutions on monks and nuns.

Tibet remains China's poorest region, even though China has devoted substantial economic resources to Tibet over the past 20 years. Language problems severely limit educational opportunities for Tibetan students. Illiteracy rates are said to be rising and non-urban children in some regions are chronically undernourished. Some reports suggest that privatization of health care, increased emphasis on Chinese language curriculum, and continuing Han migration into Tibet are all weakening the social and economic position of Tibet's indigenous population.

Let me say a few words about some of the developments, key developments. In October of 2001, we resumed our bilateral human rights dialogue with the Chinese. We made clear from the outset that our expectation was that these talks are to be substantive and results-oriented. We reiterated that the terrorist attacks of September 11 serve as a powerful reminder that the futures of responsible nations of the world are intertwined and that we must work together to ensure peace and stability for all.

We used this human rights forum to raise individual cases of concern. Most notable is the welfare and whereabouts of Gendhun Choekyi Nyima, the boy recognized by the Dalai Lama as the Panchen Lama, and his parents, who have been held incommunicado now for 7 years. The Chinese maintain that he is a normal school-boy living in China. Despite our urgings to the Chinese to allow the boy and his family to receive international visitors, they refuse to allow direct confirmation of his well-being.

Agreement to such a visit would certainly send a very positive signal to the world about China's intentions with regard to religious freedom. In January, as a humanitarian gesture, the Chinese government did release Ngawang Choephel, the Tibetan ethnomusicologist and former Middlebury College Fulbright Schol-

ar who was incarcerated in 1995 on charges of espionage. We were pleased with this development.

Along with many Members of Congress, this Administration had pushed hard for such a step. Still, we made it very clear to the Chinese that occasional and individual releases of political prisoners are simply not enough.

Last May the President, Secretary Powell and I got to hear first-hand about the situation in Tibet from the Dalai Lama. Our conversations with him left me convinced of the Dalai Lama's interest in pursuing dialogue with China's leaders. He also remains fully committed to seeking genuine autonomy for Tibet within the framework of the People's Republic of China.

Last summer Secretary Powell went to Beijing to set the ground work for President Bush's scheduled visit to China in October. Shortly thereafter, Foreign Minister Tang traveled to Washington. And during the Foreign Minister's visit I was included in the bilateral discussion which afforded an opportunity to raise concerns about Tibet directly.

The President went to Shanghai in October and had his first summit meeting with President Jiang. The two leaders had a full agenda that encompassed joint cooperation against terrorism, and other security concerns, bilateral and economic defense ties, religious freedom, human rights and Tibet.

Let me go on and say that, in fact, I accompanied President Bush on both of his trips to Shanghai and Beijing. During these visits the President urged the Chinese leadership to negotiate directly with His Holiness or his representatives, noting that the Dalai Lama's call for genuine autonomy was sincere.

In December I traveled to Norway to meet with the Dalai Lama and to get his perspective. And later this month, I plan to meet with EU representatives to solicit their views on the situation in Tibet and to discuss the best means to foster dialogue.

Widespread knowledge of China's poor human rights record in Tibet harms its international reputation and credibility. Tibet, in other words, is a difficult issue for China internationally and a problem for U.S.-China relations.

The Dalai Lama, I think, can be an asset to the difficult challenge which is posed here concerning regional and national stability. He indisputably represents the opinion of most Tibetans and his moral authority transcends Tibetan interests. If the Chinese government fails to engage with the Dalai Lama, who vigorously seeks dialogue and a mutual solution, Tibetan resistance could intensify and the potential for political upheaval could grow.

Resolving the situation in Tibet could be a win, both for the Chinese government and the Tibetan people. China stands to gain on a number of fronts. First, finding a resolution to the Tibet problem would add stability in China and provide more opportunities for cooperative economic growth. Second, the international spotlight on this issue will dim, thus removing a major impediment for engagement. And third, China will show itself to be serious about adhering to international standards on human rights and being a respected player in the international community.

Tibetans certainly stand to gain what is most important to them, simply the preservation of their culture, linguistic and ethnic herit-

age. In President Bush's statement at Qinghua University when we were in Beijing, he said,

"In a free society, diversity is not disorder. Debate is not strife, and dissent is not revolution. A free society trusts its citizens to seek greatness in themselves and their country."

Open dialogue among citizens and a fundamental protection of basic rights under the rule of law are key ingredients for internal stability, a goal that both the Chinese and Tibetans seek.

Three days from now the Dalai Lama will commemorate his 43rd year of living in exile. The Dalai Lama has shown enormous courage in articulating his position on autonomy for Tibet within the Peoples Republic of China. Should the Chinese reach an agreement with the Dalai Lama, they will open to the next generation a road to peace, advancing both Chinese and Tibetan interests. We look to the Chinese to begin the journey down this road.

In closing, I would like to thank you for this opportunity to testify today, and I look forward to working with you in the future on this extremely important issue. Thank you.

Chairman HYDE. Thank you, Secretary Dobriansky.  
[The prepared statement of Ms. Dobriansky follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE PAULA DOBRIANSKY, UNDER SECRETARY,  
OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR GLOBAL AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF  
STATE

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, I am delighted to appear before you today to testify on U.S. policy considerations in Tibet. I truly appreciate the interest and support Members of this Committee have provided on this issue. I would also like to thank the Dalai Lama's Special Envoy, Lodi Gyari, the International Campaign for Tibet, the myriad of experts, including Richard Gere who is with us today, and non-governmental organizations that have met with me over the past year.

I was appointed 10 months ago to serve as Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues concurrently with my portfolio as Under Secretary for Global Affairs. The U.S. Government's policy goals are two-fold: first to promote a substantive dialogue between the Chinese government and the Dalai Lama or his representatives, and second, to help sustain Tibet's unique religious, linguistic, and cultural heritage.

Mr. Chairman, as you and your colleagues know, disputes over Tibet's relations with the Chinese government have a long, complex history, dating back centuries. Rather than focus my testimony on the distant past, I would like to describe the current circumstances in Tibet, highlighting key developments over the past year and the areas on which I have focused since my appointment.

#### CURRENT SITUATION IN TIBET

The situation on the ground in Tibet remains grave. The State Department's annual Human Rights Report for 2001, in the section on China, clearly states that tight controls on religion and other fundamental freedoms remain serious problems. The report describes in detail widespread human rights and religious freedom abuses, including instances of arbitrary arrests, detention without public trial, torture in prison, and official controls over Tibetan monasteries and institutions on monks and nuns.

Tibet remains China's poorest region even though China has devoted substantial economic resources to Tibet over the past 20 years. Language problems severely limit educational opportunities for Tibetan students, illiteracy rates are said to be rising, and non-urban children in some regions are chronically undernourished. Some reports suggest that privatization of health care, increased emphasis on Chinese language curriculum, and continuing Han migration into Tibet are all weakening the social and economic position of Tibet's indigenous population.

## KEY DEVELOPMENTS

In October 2001, we resumed our bilateral human rights dialogue with the Chinese. We made clear from the outset that our expectation was that these talks are to be substantive and results oriented. We also reiterated that the terrorist attacks of September 11 serve as a powerful reminder that the futures of responsible nations of the world are intertwined and that we must work together to ensure peace and stability for all.

We used this human rights forum to raise individual cases of concern. Most notable is the issue of the welfare and whereabouts of Gendhun Choekyi Nyima, the boy recognized by the Dalai Lama as the Panchen Lama, and his parents, who have been held incommunicado now for 7 years. The Chinese maintain that he is a “normal schoolboy” living in China. Despite our urgings to the Chinese to allow the boy and his family to receive international visitors, they refuse to allow direct confirmation of his well-being. It is hard to understand why, if the boy is thriving as they have indicated in the past, it would be difficult to arrange a brief visit to confirm his status. Indeed, concern about the boy grows each day that his fate remains uncertain. Verbal assurances are not sufficient to allay international concerns. Agreement to such a visit would send a very positive signal to the world about China’s intentions with regard to religious freedom.

In January, as a humanitarian gesture, the Chinese Government did release Ngawang Choephel, the Tibetan ethnomusicologist and former Middlebury College Fulbright Scholar who was incarcerated in 1995 on charges of espionage. We were pleased with this development; along with many Members of Congress, the Administration had pushed hard for such a step. Still, we made it very clear to the Chinese that occasional and individual releases of political prisoners are simply not enough. It is more important than ever that we work together to narrow differences on issues such as human rights so that obstacles that have slowed the pace of the development of our bilateral relationship can be moved aside. As Secretary Powell stated before this very Committee just a month ago, “a candid, constructive, and cooperative relationship is what we are building with China—candid where we disagree, constructive where we can see some daylight, and cooperative where we have common regional or global interests.”

## MY ROLE

Last May, the President, Secretary Powell, and I got to hear firsthand about the situation in Tibet from the Dalai Lama. Our conversations with him left me convinced of the Dalai Lama’s interest in pursuing dialogue with China’s leaders. He also remains firmly committed to seeking “genuine autonomy” for Tibet within the framework of the People’s Republic of China.

Last summer, Secretary Powell went to Beijing to set the groundwork for President Bush’s scheduled visit to China in October. Shortly thereafter, Foreign Minister Tang traveled to Washington to follow up on the Secretary’s initiatives. During the Foreign Minister’s visit, I was included in bilateral discussions which afforded an opportunity to raise concerns about Tibet directly with one of China’s most influential leaders. The President went to Shanghai in October and had his first summit meeting with President Jiang. The two leaders had a full agenda that encompassed joint cooperation against terrorism and other security concerns, bilateral economic and defense ties, religious freedom, human rights, and Tibet.

The last time the leaders of our two countries got together in China, President Jiang left then-President Clinton with the impression that progress on the Tibet issue was imminent. The Chinese leader publicly expressed a readiness, albeit with pre-conditions, to meet with the Dalai Lama. Unfortunately, he soon retreated from his statement, and instead of the beginning of substantive and direct dialogue, the 1998 Clinton-Jiang Summit seemingly marked the end of communication between the two sides.

I accompanied President Bush on his trips to Shanghai and Beijing. On both visits, the President urged the Chinese leadership to negotiate directly with His Holiness or his representatives, noting that the Dalai Lama’s call for genuine autonomy was sincere.

In December, I traveled to Norway to meet with the Dalai Lama and to get his perspective. Later this month, I plan to meet with EU counterparts to solicit their views on the situation in Tibet and best means to foster dialogue.

## CONCLUSION

Widespread knowledge of China’s poor human rights record in Tibet harms its international reputation and credibility. Tibet, in other words, is a difficult issue for

China internationally, and a problem for U.S.-China relations. As Beijing approaches its 2002 Communist Party Congress, it is my impression that China's leaders see the Tibet issue as a complex political task with considerable domestic political risks. Fears of loss of central control in Tibet, the Far West, or even in coastal China, are deep-seated. China's leadership has drawn lessons from the break-up of the Soviet Union.

Examples worldwide of domestic instability based on ethnic strife demonstrate that mutual collaboration, reasonable compromise and protection of ethnic, cultural and religious rights are the best course of action for protecting national sovereignty and stability over the long-term. Indeed, the lessons of the recent past, properly construed, make the case for why Beijing should engage the Dalai Lama on the future of Tibet.

The Dalai Lama can be an asset to the difficult challenge of regional and national stability. He indisputably represents the opinion of most Tibetans, and his moral authority transcends Tibetan interests. If the Chinese government fails to engage with the Dalai Lama who vigorously seeks dialogue and a mutual solution, Tibetan resistance could intensify and the potential for political upheaval could grow.

Resolving the situation in Tibet would be a win for both the Chinese Government and the Tibetan people. China stands to gain on a number of fronts. First, finding a resolution to the Tibet problem would add stability in China and provide more opportunities for cooperative economic growth. Second, the international spotlight on this issue will dim, thus removing a major impediment for engagement with China. Third, China will show itself to be serious about adhering to international standards on human rights and being a respected player in the international community. Tibetans stand to gain, what is most important to them—the preservation of their culture, linguistic and ethnic heritage.

Conversely, much will be lost if this situation is not resolved. As President stated at Qinghua University in Beijing, "In a free society, diversity is not disorder. Debate is not strife. And dissent is not revolution. A free society trusts its citizens to seek greatness in themselves and their country." Open dialogue among all citizens and a fundamental protection of basic rights under the rule of law are key ingredients for internal stability—a goal that both the Chinese and Tibetans seek. The lack of resolution on this issue will be a stumbling block to fuller political and economic engagement with the United States and others.

Three days from now, the Dalai Lama will commemorate his forty-third year of living in exile. The Dalai Lama has shown enormous courage in articulating his position on autonomy for Tibet within the People's Republic of China. Should the Chinese reach an agreement with the Dalai Lama, they will open to the next generation a road to peace, advancing both Chinese and Tibetan interests. We look for the Chinese to begin the journey down this road.

In closing, I would like to thank you for this opportunity to testify today. I look forward to working with you now and in the future on this extremely important issue.

Chairman HYDE. I would like to welcome as part of this panel Mr. Lodi Gyari. He is the special envoy of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and serves as the Executive Chairman of the Board of the International Campaign for Tibet.

Mr. Gyari fled from Eastern Tibet to India in 1959. Following his flight, he became Chairman and Senior Cabinet Minister of the Assembly of People's Deputies, which serves as the Tibetan Parliament in exile. He also is an editor of the *Tibetan Freedom Press* and founded the *Tibetan Review*, the first English language journal to be published by Tibetans in exile.

Mr. Gyari, if you would favor us with your remarks.

**STATEMENT OF LODI GYALTSEN GYARI, SPECIAL ENVOY OF HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA**

Mr. GYARI. Mr. Chairman, I am very grateful for this opportunity. I have just returned from a short trip to India, and I bring from His Holiness his personal gratitude to you, Mr. Chairman, and to his old friend Congressman Tom Lantos.

His Holiness, as you know, was indisposed for a while. But I am very happy to also share with you that he is in perfect health and that he has started to attending to his normal responsibilities.

I will today restrict my remarks mainly to one specific issue, that being the issue or the status of the negotiations because my friend and colleague, Richard Gere, as the Chairman of International Campaign for Tibet, I think, will deal with the other issues that consume the Tibetan people.

Mr. Chairman, even though I consider it a great honor to be here today to testify, I would honestly prefer that I be sitting across with my Chinese counterparts talking to them to resolve the issue of Tibet. His Holiness has given that task to me. And for the last many years, as some of your colleagues are fully aware, as also Under Secretary Dobriansky is also fully aware, we have been making tremendous effort.

I can assure you that in the coming months, we will double our efforts, because we certainly do see the year 2002 and the coming year as the year of opportunity and challenge as China goes through major change in leadership.

But I am also disappointed to inform you that so far, in spite of tremendous effort that His Holiness has made, the Chinese have unfortunately not been able to respond positively to his efforts. The Chinese leadership continues, to our amazement, to accuse His Holiness of being "splittist," in spite of his numerous assurances both to this august body here as well as to other heads of state and parliaments that he was committed to finding a solution within the framework of PRC. For whatever reason, for whatever logic, which I have not been able to find as yet, the Chinese leadership still continue to stonewall any efforts.

But, as I said earlier, we will definitely continue to make efforts. I just wanted to share with you that His Holiness had the opportunity to visit the European Parliament where he was invited to speak to the full session in October 2001 where he once again took the opportunity to explicitly mention that he was committed, fully committed, to find a solution without seeking independence.

Having said that, I just want to make it really clear that the Tibetan people, both according to international law and according to the historical facts, have the right to seek total independence. But, nevertheless, in the mutual interests, for the long term interests, for both the Tibetan people and Chinese people, His Holiness is fully committed to seek a solution to Tibet without seeking independence.

This was also clearly mentioned during his meeting with President Bush and also with the Secretary of State and with Under Secretary Paula Dobriansky several times.

I also wanted to take this opportunity to express my gratitude again to this august body and to the Congress for your effort in helping support our people. The fact that I testified here with Under Secretary Paula Dobriansky, rather than trying to ask you to put pressure on the Administration, is a compliment to the Administration, and to a large extent that credit also goes to the hard work of many people, including people like Richard Gere and others at the International Campaign for Tibet and numerous other

Tibet support groups, and to this august body, as also to the wisdom of the leaders in the Administration.

So I just wanted to take this opportunity, not only to express our gratitude to the Congress, but also to the Administration. I also wanted to say that His Holiness and many of us in the Tibetan leadership are very grateful and are delighted that the Secretary of State chose the right person at the very crucial moment of the people's struggle to be the Tibet coordinator. In Under Secretary Paula Dobriansky, not only do we have a person who has experience and commitment but who truly, because I think of her own personal background, understands the feelings and aspirations of people such as my people.

In conclusion, I would like to say that the numerous resolutions and numerous legislations that you have passed have sent a very powerful message. Sometimes I know there are some schools of thought which says that the messages or the concern that is expressed by Congress has a reverse affect, that it sends the wrong message to people, that it gives a false hope to Tibetan people, and thereby it creates problems inside Tibet.

I wanted to assure you, Mr. Chairman and other Members, that in fact, next to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, I think you can take the full credit for maintaining peace and stability in Tibet. Tibetan people have remained peaceful in their struggle precisely because such important organizations as this Congress have periodically and consistently sent a message that they have not forgotten them. And this is very important. I just wanted to assure you on this because I think when people lose hope, then people are compelled to do things which they normally do not wish to do.

And in the opening remark, I think my friend, Tom Lantos, had something very, very important. You referred to this ongoing war against international terrorism. We are all in it. At the same time, to win that war, ultimately, you have to also fight other battles. You have to analyze why those things happen.

That is precisely why issues such as Tibet is very important. That is precisely very important for you to send the message that while you are committed to a fight on international terrorism, you are also committed to support those who are committed to a non-violent struggle. I think there is no struggle which illustrates so clearly the non-violent nature of the struggle than the struggle that has been led by my leader, His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

I just wanted to also say that the changes that have taken place in China are also, to use the Chinese term, earth-shattering. I was just reading the Chinese Prime Minister's statement to the National People's Congress yesterday. Fifty or twenty years back such a thing wasn't possible.

So therefore I do see hope. I mean, when you read his statement, even though we want them to move much faster and to bring about more political changes, but I certainly do see hope there. For example, the Prime Minister talks about going really down to the grass roots, really analyzing the problems, why there is discontentment, why they have to really understand them. That is how they should look at the issue of Tibet. If they really also examine also the issue of Tibet and ask why is it people have this strong resentment

against Chinese rule, then I think the Chinese leadership would realize, and the Dalai Lama will have the solution.

It is this simple Buddhist monk who can not only help lead the Tibetans back to their homeland, but can also help China find a solution to the issue of Tibet, which will contribute to the stability and the unity of China. That, I think, seems to be the major concern of the Chinese leaders, the national unity and stability. And if they are genuinely concerned, then the only person they need to reach out to is this friend of yours, this simple Buddhist monk, because he is not the problem, he is the solution to the problem that the Chinese have, which the Chinese have created in Tibet.

And since the time is limited, and also my friend Richard Gere will speak on many other issues, I think I will conclude my remarks but will submit my written statement for the record.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Thank you very much, Congressman Tom Lantos.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Gyari follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LODI GYALTSEN GYARI, SPECIAL ENVOY OF HIS HOLINESS  
THE DALAI LAMA

Chairman Hyde, it is an honor to testify before this esteemed Committee. Thank you for your interest. Indeed, the long sustained interest of the International Relations Committee in the issue of Tibet has been a significant asset to the efforts of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan leadership as we continue to seek a negotiated solution with Beijing.

I have just returned from a visit to India to consult with the Tibetan leadership and His Holiness the Dalai Lama, who has asked me to convey his greetings and gratitude to you, Mr. Chairman, and the members of this Committee. As was widely reported in the media, His Holiness was recently indisposed, but now I am pleased to inform you that he is completely recovered and is beginning to attend to his normal routine.

Members of Congress acting in Committee and individually have taken significant initiative to reach out to the Chinese leadership to urge dialogue with His Holiness, respect for religious freedom, and on behalf of certain Tibetan political prisoners. I know that some congressional friends have been deeply frustrated in their efforts and have even questioned the utility of continuously raising Tibet with the Chinese when their words appear to fall on deaf ears. Yet, I must ask you today not to give up.

For the people of Tibet, congressional resolve has given us hope that the possibility of a political solution has not been foreclosed. As long as people have hope, they refrain from desperate measures. Although Tibetans inside Tibet must live in a political and economic situation increasingly beyond their control and by every measure less and less Tibetan, they still cling to hope—hope that His Holiness the Dalai Lama will one day return and hope that they will be delivered from Chinese oppression.

As His Holiness has given me the responsibility of assisting him to reach out to the Chinese leadership, I can assure you that we are working very hard and sincerely to start a dialogue leading to negotiations. His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Middle Way approach provides a meeting point between Tibetan and Chinese interests. In brief, this approach says that despite the historical right of Tibetans to be independent, His Holiness is willing to begin talks on genuine autonomy for the Tibetan people within the People's Republic of China.

When His Holiness met President George W. Bush last May, he sought the administration's support in encouraging the Chinese government to respond positively to his efforts at dialogue. He also explicitly asked the President to convey to the Chinese government that he is only seeking genuine autonomy for the Tibetan people, and not independence. President Bush strongly spoke about Tibet during his visit to Shanghai last year. Again, during his recent visit to Beijing, President Bush urged negotiations with the Dalai Lama. On both these trips the President conveyed the serious concern for Tibet by including in his delegation Undersecretary Dobriansky, the US Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues.

I would also like to use this occasion to express publicly my appreciation to Secretary of State Colin Powell for his selection of Undersecretary Dobriansky to be the

Tibet Coordinator. I have worked with Undersecretary Dobriansky for some eight months and on three continents. She is committed to making progress on the issue of dialogue and has assiduously labored on that front. His Holiness and leaders of the Tibetan exile government are especially pleased to know that someone who intuitively understands devotion to homeland and sees the possibility for change in Tibet is now the U.S. representative to the Chinese leadership on Tibetan issues.

In spite of these efforts and to our disappointment, the Chinese government has not only failed to respond positively but they continue to create the impression that His Holiness the Dalai Lama continues to engage in “splittist” activities and, for reasons which are beyond my comprehension, they continue to misrepresent and distort His Holiness’ actions.

In October last year His Holiness was invited to address the full plenary session of the European Parliament. It was my privilege to accompany him to Strasbourg, France. At the European Parliament, His Holiness restated his position that he is seeking genuine autonomy, not independence, for Tibet. I ask that the full text of His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s October 24, 2001 address to the European Parliament be included in the official record of this hearing. His Holiness said, in part:

“I have led the Tibetan freedom struggle on a path on non-violence and have consistently sought a mutually agreeable solution to the Tibetan issue through negotiations in the spirit of reconciliation and compromise with China . . . my proposal envisages that Tibet enjoy genuine autonomy within the framework of the People’s Republic of China. However, not the autonomy on paper imposed on us 50 years ago in the 17-Point Agreement, but a true self-governing, genuinely autonomous Tibet, with Tibetans fully responsible for their own domestic affairs, including the education of their children, religious matters, cultural affairs, the care of their delicate and precious environment, and the local economy. Beijing would continue to be responsible for the conduct of foreign and defense affairs. This solution would greatly enhance the international image of China and contribute to her stability and unity—the two topmost priorities of Beijing—while at the same time the Tibetans would be ensured of the basic rights and freedoms to preserve their own civilization and to protect the delicate environment of the Tibetan Plateau.”

In three days, His Holiness will deliver his annual address to the Tibetan people on the 43rd anniversary of the 1959 uprising and his flight into exile. His Holiness will once again repeat his commitment to non-violence and dialogue.

Although on the issue of negotiations, we have seen no substantive movement, we have not given up hope. In fact we are going to be much more vigorous in our effort while China’s policies toward the Tibetan people continue to be repressive.

It is encouraging to see the overall trend in China, which I must say is one that is moving in the right direction even though at much slower pace than we all hope for. I was reflecting yesterday on the March 5 address by Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji to the National People’s Congress. Compared to the rhetoric that one heard from Chinese leaders 15 to 20 years back, the difference is, to use a term the Chinese themselves are fond of using, “earth shattering.” In particular, I was encouraged to read Premier Zhu reflecting the mood and anger of the Chinese workers and farmers. Advising the Chinese officials, Premier Zhu said, “We should initiate investigations and studies, go all the way down to the realities of life and to the people to learn their actual conditions, listen to their opinions, share their weal and woe, and lose no time in solving the problems they resent or are dissatisfied about.”

This is precisely what the Chinese leadership needs to do on Tibet. The problem is not the relationship between His Holiness and the Chinese and definitely not about the return of the Dalai Lama or his position. If the Chinese authorities reflected on the Tibetan problem in the way Premier Zhu was advising, it should be them who should be seeking the good offices of the Dalai Lama to find a solution.

Mr. Chairman, my intention is not to spend my time and energy knocking on the doors of the international community and institutions such as this august body but to engage directly the Chinese in serious and meaningful dialogue to resolve the issue. But until we get a positive response from the Chinese side and our talks begin, His Holiness the Dalai Lama and those who work for him have an obligation to the Tibetan people to make every effort possible to continue to talk about the plight of the Tibetan people, both publicly and privately, and to urge the Chinese government to respond to our sincere effort.

The United States Congress has been a beacon of hope to the Tibetan people’s nonviolent, legitimate struggle for the preservation and promotion of their unique heritage and national identity. Congressional action on Tibet has gone beyond expressions of support to include important concrete help through various assistance programs.

These programs go beyond taking care of the immediate needs of refugees who have had to flee our homeland to include projects that help preserve Tibet's distinct identity and cultural, religious and linguistic heritage.

Ironically, the essence of the Tibetan culture, if not its full flowering, is currently best preserved outside of Tibet because His Holiness the Dalai Lama has reestablished many of our traditional institutions in exile to this purpose. Today, while preserving our traditional Tibetan way of life, Tibetans in exile live in a vibrant modern and democratic civil society, with the highest of our government's leaders directly elected by the people and a vibrant civil society. The generous assistance provided by the people of the United States is making it possible for an ancient but living Tibetan civilization to sustain itself.

One of the major concerns of our struggle is the empowerment of the Tibetan people. We are gratified that the United States is contributing in the preparation of our young people to serve our community through educational opportunities in many of your best institutions.

Tibetans in exile also receive support and assistance for the promotion of human rights and democracy training through small program grants of the National Endowment for Democracy. These targeted grants have been of great value to our fledgling NGOs, our free press, and have enriched the community at large, an arrangement that has been tremendously gratifying for all parties involved.

Of greatest concern to His Holiness the Dalai Lama are Tibetans inside Tibet. Under the present circumstances, there is very little that His Holiness can directly contribute towards their socio-economic well-being. However, we greatly appreciate and strongly encourage congressional support for some programs inside Tibet.

It is very important to monitor the programs so that they directly benefit the Tibetan people and to make certain that the programs are implemented in the most sensible and sensitive manner, so as not to put at risk the people on the ground. Since the intention of these programs is to help stave off the process of marginalization and to empower Tibetans, it is essential that the programs be inspired, and to the greatest extent possible, implemented by Tibetans and not imposed solely at the discretion of "experts."

It is ironic that the present Chinese attitude has, in fact, become a major hindrance to the infusion of tremendous international interest in participating in the reconstruction and development of Tibet. The contact, goodwill and the warm relations that His Holiness and the Tibetan people have established in the last 50 years could serve as a tremendous resource for Tibet. It would have been a positive and meaningful development had the much-publicized "Western Development" program—as far as it affected Tibetan areas—was formulated in consultation with His Holiness. It is never too late. Instead the "Western Development" program is becoming yet another source of resentment for the Tibetans in Tibet against the Chinese leadership because they do not see any direct benefit.

Other congressional initiatives that have long-term positive influence on the Tibetan people are the Tibetan language programs of the Voice of America and Radio Free Asia. Today, Tibetans inside Tibet are informed about international initiatives on Tibet on a daily basis through these broadcasts. While we are pleased with the overall performance of these programs, it is important for the Congress from time to time to review their performances to see that the goals and the intent of the Congress are maintained.

Comprehensive legislation that incorporates all of these initiatives is the Tibetan Policy Act, which is presently before the Congress. It was introduced in the House by Congressmen Lantos and Kirk and has, I believe, 98 cosponsors. Senator Dianne Feinstein, who regards His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Senior Chinese leaders as her friends, spoke these words on the Senate floor when introducing the Senate bill:

"I want to be a positive force for bringing Tibetan and Chinese leaders to the table for face-to-face dialogue. It is not my intention with this legislation to merely point fingers and lay blame . . . my intent in introducing the Tibetan Policy Act is to place the full faith of the United States Government behind efforts to preserve the distinct cultural, religious and ethnic autonomy of the Tibetan people . . . I am convinced that we must send a clear message."

Mr. Chairman, you can be sure that the Tibetan Policy Act and other messages sent by this body on behalf of the political and human rights challenges facing Tibetans are heard and carefully noted in Beijing. As China enters into a period of political transition, unsettled issues, such as Tibet, could be reconsidered and international implications for policy adjustments would be weighed.

We are deeply concerned about the human rights situation in Tibet. The Tibet section of the Human Rights report released by the State Department this week indicates the seriousness lack of freedom in Tibet. I hope that future reports on Tibet

by the State Department will be comprehensive, cover all Tibetan areas, and reflect the spirit and intent of the legislation that directed the State Department to report on human rights abuses in Tibet.

Hundreds of political prisoners languish in jails. I said when Ngawang Choephel was released that, if this is a genuine effort on China's part to make a gesture to the Tibetan people and not an appeasement to President Bush on the eve of his Beijing visit, then it needs to be followed by the release of additional political prisoners. Tanak Jigme Sangpo, a 74-year old teacher who spent the best part of his life in prison, as well as the nuns in Drapchi prison—Ngawang Sandrol, Gyaltzen Drolkar, Ngawang Choezom, Jigme Yangchen, Ngawang Choekyi, Phuntsog Nyidron, Lhundrub Zangmo, Tenzin Thubten, Rigzin Choekyi, Ngawang Tsamdrol and Namdrol Lhamo—should all be released.

I would like to thank the Congress for its advocacy on behalf of Ngawang Choephel and other prisoners, and Congressman Lantos for his personal efforts on behalf of Tanak Jigme Sangpo.

Of course, our major concern continues to be the case of the young Panchen Lama. Even today we have no information on his whereabouts. The Panchen Lama is still missing 7 years after he was taken into custody by the Chinese authorities at the age of 6. His continued detention is not merely an egregious affront to religious freedom; it is a cruelty against a child.

Concerning Chadrrel Rinpoche, there are conflicting reports. His sentence is complete but the Chinese government has not made any formal announcement about his release. We wait with hope for some positive movement from the Chinese side. In the next six months, if some prominent Tibetan political prisoners are released, then we will acknowledge that there is a positive trend.

This year and the next are years of opportunity and challenge for Tibet. As we all know, a new leadership will be ushered in. However, unlike some other observers, I do not expect any major fundamental shift. Jiang Zemin will continue to exert a strong influence and if the succession process goes smoothly the present Vice President, Hu Jintao, will be the leader of the fourth generation that will take charge. I do not intend to present here an analytical study of the Chinese leadership. However, the fact that Hu spent some time in Tibet and is well versed with the situation there could be a positive factor and an opportunity for Tibet. However, I believe that we need to look at Hu Jintao in his unique situation, instead of trying to see if he will be a "Gorbachov" or a "Putin." China will continue to be governed by a collective leadership with Hu at the core.

Again, Mr. Chairman and Congressman Lantos, thank you for convening this hearing. I look forward to working with you, Chairman Leach, and all members of this Committee in the interest of Tibet.

SPEECH OF HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

*Madame Speaker, Honourable Members of the Parliament, ladies and gentlemen.*

*It is a great honour for me to address the European Parliament. I believe the European Union is an inspiring example for a cooperative and peaceful co-existence among different nations and peoples and deeply inspiring for people like myself who strongly believe in the need for better understanding, closer cooperation, and greater respect among the various nations of the world. I thank you for this kind invitation. I consider it as an encouraging gesture of genuine sympathy and concern for the tragic fate of the Tibetan people. I speak to you today as a simple Buddhist monk, educated and trained in our ancient traditional way. I am not an expert in political science. However, my life-long study and practice of Buddhism and my responsibility and involvement in the non-violent freedom struggle of the Tibetan people have given me some experiences and thoughts that I would like to share with you.*

*It is evident that the human community has reached a critical juncture in its history. Today's world requires us to accept the oneness of humanity. In the past, communities could afford to think of one another as fundamentally separate. But today, as we learn from the recent tragic events in the United States, whatever happens in one region eventually affects many other areas. The world is becoming increasingly interdependent. Within the context of this new interdependence, self-interest clearly lies in considering the interest of others. Without the cultivation and promotion of a sense of universal responsibility our very future is in danger.*

*I strongly believe that we must consciously develop a greater sense of universal responsibility. We must learn to work not just for our own individual self, family or nation, but for the benefit of all mankind. Universal responsibility is the best foundation both for our personal happiness and for world peace, the equitable use of our natural resources, and, through a concern for future generations, the proper care for the environment.*

*Many of the world's problems and conflicts arise because we have lost sight of the basic humanity that binds us all together as a human family. We tend to forget that despite the diversity of race, religion, culture, language, ideology and so forth, people are equal in their basic desire for peace and happiness: we all want happiness and do not want suffering. We strive to fulfill these desires as best we can. However, as much as we praise diversity in theory, unfortunately often we fail to respect it in practice. In fact, our inability to embrace diversity becomes a major source of conflict among peoples.*

*A particularly sad fact of human history is that conflicts have arisen in the name of religion. Even today, individuals are killed, their communities destroyed and societies destabilized as a result of misuse of religion and encouragement of religious bigotry and hatred. According to my personal experience the best way to overcome obstructions to inter-religious harmony and to bring about understanding is through dialogue with members of other faith traditions. This I see occurring in a number of different ways. In my own case, for example, my meetings with the late Thomas Merton, a Trappist monk, in the late 60s, were deeply inspiring. They helped me develop a profound admiration for the teachings of Christianity. I also feel that meetings amongst different religious leaders and joining together to pray from a common platform are extremely powerful, as was the case in 1986 during the gathering at Assisi in Italy. The recent United Nations Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders held last year was also a laudable step. However, there is a need for more of these initiatives on a regular basis. On my part, to show my respect for other religious traditions I went on pilgrimage to Jerusalem a site holy to three of the world's great religions. I have paid visits to various Hindu, Islamic, Christian, Jain and Sikh shrines both in India and abroad. During the past three decades I have met with many religious leaders of different traditions and have discussed harmony and inter-religious understanding. When exchanges like these occur, followers of one tradition will find that, just as in the case of their own, the teachings of other faiths are a source of both spiritual inspiration and as well as ethical guidance to their followers. It will also become clear that irrespective of doctrinal and other differences, all the major world religions help to transform individuals to become good human beings. All emphasize love, compassion, patience, tolerance, forgiveness, humility, self-discipline and so on. We must therefore embrace the concept of plurality in the field of religion, too.*

*In the context of our newly emerging global community all forms of violence, including war, are totally inappropriate means of settling disputes. Violence and war have always been part of human history, and in ancient times there were winners and losers. However, there would be no winners at all if another global conflict were to occur today. We must, therefore, have the courage and vision to call for a world without nuclear weapons and national armies in the long run. Especially, in the light of the terrible attacks in the United States the international community must make a sincere attempt to use the horrible and shocking experience to develop a sense of global responsibility, where a culture of dialogue and non-violence is used in resolving differences.*

*Dialogue is the only sensible and intelligent way of resolving differences and clashes of interests, whether between individuals or nations. The promotion of a culture of dialogue and non-violence for the future of mankind is a compelling task of the international community. It is not enough for governments to endorse the principle of non-violence without any appropriate action to support and promote it. If non-violence is to prevail, non-violent movements must be made effective and successful. Some consider the 20th century a century of war and bloodshed. I believe the challenge before us is to make the new century one of dialogue and non-violence.*

*Furthermore, in dealing with conflicts too often we lack proper judgment and courage. We fail to pay adequate attention to situations of potential conflict when they are at an early stage of development. Once all the circumstances have progressed to a state where emotions of the people or communities involved in disputes have become fully charged, it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to prevent a dangerous situation from exploding. We see this tragic situation repeated time and again. So we must learn to detect early signs of conflict and have the courage to address the problem before it reaches its boiling point.*

*I remain convinced that most human conflicts can be solved through genuine dialogue conducted with a spirit of openness and reconciliation. I have therefore consistently sought a resolution of the issue of Tibet through non-violence and dialogue. Right from the beginning of the invasion of Tibet, I tried to work with the Chinese authorities to arrive at a mutually acceptable, peaceful co-existence. Even when the so-called Seventeen Point Agreement for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet was forced upon us I tried to work with the Chinese authorities. After all, by that agreement the Chinese government recognized the distinctiveness and the autonomy of Tibet and*

*pledged not to impose their system on Tibet against our wishes. However, in breach of this agreement, the Chinese authorities forced upon Tibetans their rigid and alien ideology and showed scant respect for the unique culture, religion and way of life of the Tibetan people. In desperation the Tibetan people rose up against the Chinese. In the end in 1959 I had to escape from Tibet so that I could continue to serve the people of Tibet.*

*During the past more than four decades since my escape, Tibet has been under the complete control of the Government of the People's Republic of China. The immense destruction and human suffering inflicted on the people of Tibet are today well known and I do not wish to dwell on these sad and painful events. The late Panchen Lama's 70,000-character petition to the Chinese government serves as a telling historical document on China's draconian policies and actions in Tibet. Tibet today continues to be an occupied country, oppressed by force and scarred by suffering. Despite some development and economic progress, Tibet continues to face fundamental problems of survival. Serious violations of human rights are widespread throughout Tibet and are often the result of policies of racial and cultural discrimination. Yet they are only the symptoms and consequences of a deeper problem. The Chinese authorities view Tibet's distinct culture and religion as the source of threat of separation. Hence as a result of deliberate policies an entire people with its unique culture and identity are facing the threat of extinction.*

*I have led the Tibetan freedom struggle on a path of non-violence and have consistently sought a mutually agreeable solution of the Tibetan issue through negotiations in a spirit of reconciliation and compromise with China. With this spirit in 1988 here in Strasbourg at this Parliament I presented a formal proposal for negotiations, which we hoped would serve as a basis for resolving the issue of Tibet. I had chosen consciously the European Parliament as a venue to present my thoughts for a framework for negotiations in order to underline the point that a genuine union can only come about voluntarily when there are satisfactory benefits to all the parties concerned. The European Union is a clear and inspiring example of this. On the other hand, even one country or community can break into two or more entities when there is a lack of trust and benefit, and when force is used as the principal means of rule.*

*My proposal which later became known as the "Middle Way Approach" or the "Strasbourg Proposal" envisages that Tibet enjoy genuine autonomy within the framework of the People's Republic of China. However, not the autonomy on paper imposed on us 50 years ago in the 17-Point Agreement, but a true self-governing, genuinely autonomous Tibet, with Tibetans fully responsible for their own domestic affairs, including the education of their children, religious matters, cultural affairs, the care of their delicate and precious environment, and the local economy. Beijing would continue to be responsible for the conduct of foreign and defense affairs. This solution would greatly enhance the international image of China and contribute to her stability and unity—the two topmost priorities of Beijing—while at the same time the Tibetans would be ensured of the basic rights and freedoms to preserve their own civilization and to protect the delicate environment of the Tibetan plateau.*

*Since then our relation with the Chinese government has taken many twists and turns. Unfortunately, I must sadly inform you that a lack of political will on the part of the Chinese leadership to address the issue of Tibet in a serious manner has failed to produce any progress. My initiatives and overtures over the years to engage the Chinese leadership in a dialogue remain unreciprocated. Last September, I communicated through the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi our wish to send a delegation to Beijing to deliver a detailed memorandum outlining my thinking on the issue of Tibet and to explain and discuss the points raised in the memorandum. I conveyed that through face-to-face meetings we would succeed in clarifying misunderstandings and overcoming distrust. I expressed the strong belief that once this is achieved then a mutually acceptable solution of the problem can be found without much difficulty. But the Chinese government is refusing to accept my delegation till today. It is obvious that Beijing's attitude has hardened significantly compared to the eighties when six Tibetan delegations from exile were accepted. Whatever explanations Beijing may give concerning communications between the Chinese government and myself I must state here clearly that the Chinese government is refusing to talk to representatives I have designated for the task.*

*The failure of the Chinese leadership to respond positively to my Middle Way Approach reaffirms the Tibetan people's suspicion that the Chinese government has no interest whatsoever in any kind of peaceful co-existence. Many Tibetans believe that China is bent on complete forceful assimilation and absorption of Tibet into China. They call for the independence of Tibet and criticise my "Middle Way Approach". Others are advocating a referendum in Tibet. They argue if conditions inside Tibet are as the Chinese authorities portray it to be and if the Tibetans are truly happy, then there should be no difficulty holding a plebiscite in Tibet. I have also always*

*maintained that ultimately the Tibetan people must be able to decide about the future of Tibet as Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, stated in the Indian Parliament on December 7, 1950: “. . . the last voice in regard to Tibet should be the voice of the people of Tibet and nobody else.”*

*While I firmly reject the use of violence as a means in our freedom struggle we certainly have the right to explore all other political options available to us. I am a staunch believer in freedom and democracy and have therefore been encouraging the Tibetans in exile to follow the democratic process. Today, the Tibetan refugees may be among the few communities in exile that have established all the three pillars of democracy: legislature, judiciary and executive. This year we have taken another big stride in the process of democratisation by having the chairman of the Tibetan Cabinet elected by popular vote. The elected chairman of the Cabinet and the elected parliament will shoulder the responsibility of running the Tibetan affairs as the legitimate representatives of the people. However, I do consider it my moral obligation to the six million Tibetans to continue taking up the Tibetan issue with the Chinese leadership and to act as the free spokesman of the Tibetan people until a solution is reached.*

*In the absence of any positive response from the Chinese government to my overtures over the years, I am left with no alternative but to appeal to the members of the international community. It is clear now that only increased, concerted and consistent international efforts will persuade Beijing to change its policy on Tibet. Although the immediate reactions from the Chinese side will be most probably negative, nevertheless, I strongly believe that expressions of international concern and support are essential for creating an environment conducive for the peaceful resolution of the Tibetan problem. On my part, I remain committed to the process of dialogue. It is my firm belief that dialogue and a willingness to look with honesty and clarity at the reality of Tibet can lead us to a mutually beneficial solution that will contribute to the stability and unity of the People's Republic of China and secure the right for the Tibetan people to live in freedom, peace and dignity.*

*Madam Speaker, honourable members of the Parliament, brothers and sisters of the European Parliament, I consider myself as the free spokesman for my captive countrymen and women. It is my duty to speak on their behalf. I speak not with a feeling of anger or hatred towards those who are responsible for the immense suffering of our people and the destruction of our land, homes, temples, monasteries and culture. They too are human beings who struggle to find happiness, and deserve our compassion. I speak to inform you of the sad situation in my country today and of the aspirations of my people, because in our struggle for freedom, truth is the only weapon we possess. Today, our people, our distinct rich cultural heritage and our national identity are facing the threat of extinction. We need your support to survive as a people and as a culture.*

*When one looks at the situation inside Tibet it seems almost hopeless in the face of increasing repression, continuing environmental destruction, and the ongoing systematic undermining of the culture and identity of Tibet. Yet I believe that no matter how big and powerful China may be she is still part of the world. The global trend today is towards more openness, freedom, democracy and respect for human rights. Sooner or later China will have to follow the world trend and in the long run there is no way that China can escape from truth, justice and freedom. Since the Tibetan issue is closely related with what is happening in China, I believe there is reason and ground for hope.*

*The consistent and principled engagement of the European Parliament with China will accelerate this process of change that is already taken place in China. I would like to thank the European Parliament for the consistent display of concern and support for the non-violent Tibetan freedom struggle. Your sympathy and support have always been a deep source of inspiration and encouragement to the Tibetan people both inside and outside Tibet. The numerous resolutions of the European Parliament on the issue of Tibet helped greatly to highlight the plight of the Tibetan people and raise the awareness of the public and governments in Europe and around the world of the issue of Tibet. I am especially encouraged by the European Parliament's resolution calling for the appointment of an EU special representative for Tibet. I strongly believe that the implementation of this resolution will enable the European Union not only to help promote a peaceful resolution of the Tibetan issue through negotiations in a more consistent, effective and creative way but also provide support for other legitimate needs of the Tibetan people, including ways and means to preserve our distinct identity. This initiative will also send a strong signal to Beijing that the European Union is serious in encouraging and promoting a solution of the Tibetan problem. I have no doubt that your continued expressions of concern and support for Tibet will in the long run impact positively and help create the conducive political environment for a constructive dialogue on the issue of Tibet. I ask for your contin-*

*ued support in this critical time in our country's history. I thank you for providing me the opportunity to share my thoughts with you.*  
*Thank you.*

THE DALAI LAMA.  
 24 OCTOBER, 2001

Chairman HYDE. Thank you very much, Mr. Gyari. I would now like to welcome Mr. Richard Gere, a distinguished actor and Chairman of the Internal Campaign for Tibet.

As I dare say everyone in this room is aware, he starred in several prominent motion pictures and theatrical productions, including *An Officer and a Gentleman*, *Pretty Woman*, and a long list of very successful movies.

Mr. Gere has long been recognized for his activism on behalf of international human rights, with special emphasis on Tibet. He is the recipient of multiple awards, including the AIDS Leadership Award from Harvard University's AIDS Institute and the Media Spotlight Award for leadership from Amnesty International.

This is not the first time Mr. Gere has appeared before this Committee, and we all trust it will not be the last. Welcome once again, Mr. Gere, and we would love to hear from you.

**STATEMENT OF RICHARD GERE, CHAIRMAN, INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET**

Mr. GERE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You have been speaking to my PR people, obviously.

As I told you before, I was shooting a new movie up in Toronto and we worked all night long, and I left the set about 6:30 in the morning to fly down here. So my brain is really not as active as I would want it to be, and I am going to be reading more than I normally would, so you will have to bear with me. I am sorry about that.

I do want to thank you for inviting me here today with the new configuration of the Committee, and our new Chairman. I think it is wonderful that you have taken up the subject that is very important to all of us.

It is a great honor for me to be here personally and to see old friends here, especially Tom Lantos, good to see you again. You are a friend of peoples all over over the world and thank you for your continuing hard work for the Tibetan people. It is also really an honor for me to speak after the Under Secretary, Paula Dobriansky, who brought such extraordinary competence and clarity to the issue immediately when she took on the job. We all feel incredibly comfortable with her—with her abilities and her energy that she is bringing to the subject. That she will share that energy with the rest of the Congress is going to be wonderful for you and for us. It is also an honor to follow my very, very dear friend and partner Lodi Gyari. He is one of the important people in Asian politics, and clearly whatever form Tibet takes in the future, Lodi Gyari is going to be a major part of that. It is important for all of our Congressmen and Senators to get to know Lodi because he is a force that will be around a long time. It will be an enormous help, not only to the people of Asia and Tibet, but also the American people, to understand what is going on in that part of the world.

I want to focus my remarks today on religious freedom, and the troubling developments facing refugees from Tibet, nearly half of whom are monks and nuns. In January I was just in Bodhgaya, India where the historical Buddha had his enlightenment 2,500 years ago. The Dalai Lama was giving a Kalachakra initiation at that time, which is a huge event historically inside of Tibet and outside of Tibet. At this time it was estimated to be 150,000 Tibetans in Bodhgaya, along with 50,000 pilgrims from Bhutan, Nepal, and other countries.

Many of the Tibetans were recent refugees, having made the truly perilous journey through the mountains, the high Himalayas, from Tibet through Nepal and finally to India. All of those Tibetans who walked, hid, bribed their way around Chinese and Nepalese border guards came to see His Holiness the Dalai Lama. As you know, he is the 1989 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, who they respectfully refer to as Yeshe Norbu, or the Wish-Fulfilling Jewel.

In Bodhgaya, I spoke to many monks and nuns who shared familiar stories of religious persecution in Tibet and heard their tales of how they got out of Tibet—all of them horrific. I will share these tales with you, and they have not changed, I must say, over the last 15, 20, 30, 40 years, the stories of—horrific stories of people getting out of Tibet are something that we continually hear about.

Tibetans are still forbidden in Tibet by law to worship His Holiness, Dalai Lama, including even the display of a photograph of him on their altars. Limits imposed by the Chinese authorities on a number of monks and nuns in monasteries prohibit entrance before the age of 18 and require expulsion after the age of 60. That effectively cuts out the important learning and teaching times in the monastic community.

Two Tibetan monastic centers in particular were targets of massive destruction and expulsions in recent months, and both were reported in the international press. I met several monks and nuns from these centers, and I will come back to their accounts at the end of my testimony.

Because of the central role of His Holiness in the struggle of the Tibetan people to regain their freedoms, it is, I think, important to examine the situation of Tibet, particularly in Bodhgaya where His Holiness had to cancel the teachings. I think everyone has heard that His Holiness was sick, had to cancel and was flown to Bombay to the hospital. Fortunately, it was not serious. And I am told by Lodi who was just with His Holiness that he seems to have made a full recovery, which we are all very pleased to hear. The reaction to his recent illness within the Tibetan community, as well as outside, has been hysteria and confusion. There were all kinds of rumors.

What that means essentially to the Tibetan community is something extraordinary. We have here the one man who really holds that community together, the one man who has kept it non-violent. As Lodi so eloquently says over and over again, the Dalai Lama is the solution to the problem. It is really important that, while the Dalai Lama is still with us, that he is given the energy and the support from democracies and human rights advocates around the world to do the work he has to do to create a lasting peace and solution to the problems inside of Tibet.

I would like to talk a little about the Chinese control apparatus which is in place throughout Tibet, which makes any kind of political discussion, any kind of political demonstration totally unrealistic. For example, we know that any Tibetan in Tibet who even with his hands folded in prayer says, long live His Holiness the Dalai Lama, is in a matter of minutes converged upon by the police and taken away.

Ironically, the Chinese propaganda machine has targeted the religious authority of His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, with its harshest rhetoric. China's leaders appear blind to the recognition that His Holiness and his teachings—which promote the development of an ethic of peace, tolerance, forgiveness and compromise—are the greatest hope for ultimate stability in Tibet.

I ask Members of this Committee to use their considerable influence to urge the Chinese leadership to reconsider their brutal stance in Tibet, and to begin meaningful dialogue with His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, or his representatives, in order to find a peaceful solution.

The second area that I believe the U.S. Government must deal with great sensitivity and dispatch, is China's apparent growing influence in Nepal. I have a lot of friends in Kathmandu. I am not allowed in either China or Tibet. It is almost 10 years now that I have not been able to get a Chinese visa, and have never been told why or whether that I am on that list of people who speak the truth, who are not allowed in China or Tibet.

And our old friend Benjamin Gilman, I would like to ask him to consider convening a hearing of the South Asia and Middle East Subcommittee on this alliance, its impact for the region, including Tibet, and steps the United States might take to bolster Nepal's fragile democracy.

The Kingdom of Nepal, its government and people, have been rocked by tragedy, obviously. The Maoist rebels are on a murderous rampage that is spreading from the remote interior to more populated areas, and the government has imposed a state of emergency.

Reports from Nepal describe tremendous unease among the population. There really is a lot of fear all over. The Tibetan community has been frightened for decades in Nepal, but now it is particularly on edge not knowing quite what to do in the midst of these tense situations. They have suggested that the Chinese diplomats have begun to play hardball with Nepalese government on the issue of Tibetan refugees.

Mr. Chairman, the International Campaign for Tibet is releasing today a draft report on Tibetan refugees that describes the increasingly inhospitable situation in Nepal, and I commend it to you and your staff. Among its findings are: increased incidences of refoulements at the Nepal-Tibet border; a clampdown on Tibetans without official papers in long established refugee centers and settlements; the arrest of Tibetan students voluntarily repatriating to Tibet after the completion of their studies in India; a new restrictive attitude with regard to Tibetan culture and religious events, including not allowing the photograph of His Holiness to be displayed during public gatherings; and the rise of hostile youth groups with apparent ties to the Chinese Embassy in Kathmandu.

Since the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees opened an office in Kathmandu and began counting Tibetan refugees in 1993, there has been a steady flow of about 2,500 to 3,500 arrivals in Nepal each year. These refugees come over the high mountains—most of them wearing little more than T-shirts and tennis shoes—and make their way across with families, and obviously a lot of them die in the process. The average number of refugees has been about 2,500 who have made it through. And if one—I don't know if any of you have ever been—Tom, have you been to those settlements? To the refugee centers on the border?

Mr. LANTOS. I have.

Mr. GERE. One cannot fail to have your heart permanently opened to see what those people have suffered, to get out of Tibet and find the settlements of freedom.

Anyhow, the number is down this year to 1,381 refugees and that is about a half of the average. Now, with this Kalachakra initiation that was being held in Bodhgaya, we anticipated a considerable rise in the number of refugees and arrivals, but that didn't happen and we were confused.

Well, the impact of the Maoist insurgency has created very dangerous conditions in areas of Nepal that Tibetan refugees traverse. The International Campaign for Tibet believes that the reduced refugee flow principally results from a new understanding between the Chinese and Nepalese government. This understanding manifests itself as: Increased Chinese mountain border posts along the Nangpa-la pass, the escape route most frequently used by the Tibetans; the greater inclination among Nepalese police to hand over Tibetan refugees to Chinese border guards, rather than to abide by the verbal agreement between the Nepalese Government and the UNHCR that provides for safe transit for Tibetan refugees through Nepal to India; denied or curtailed access for the UNHCR to border areas where it had systematically trained Nepalese police in safe-transit procedures; and an unresponsive home ministry to Tibet refugee concerns.

Increasingly, Tibetan refugees can no longer count on the protection of the UNHCR or the willingness of the Nepalese government to allow their safe passage.

I urge this Committee to make inquiries of the U.S. Ambassador in Kathmandu, Nepalese authorities, and the UNHCR concerning the modalities of returning to what had been a crucial solution for Tibetans seeking freedom in exile.

I would also respectfully request that the U.S. Government encourage the UNHCR in Kathmandu to be vigilant and proactive in carrying out their protective duties concerning Tibetan refugees. It is really very, very important.

Finally, I would ask that the appropriate congressional Committee explore the possibility of the United States providing asylums to Tibetans, which would lessen the stress on the Nepalese and Indian governments. This is something we really have to look at very, very carefully. We have had successful settlement programs for Tibetans. Based on that, we can allow many more Tibetans to come into this country.

At this time I would like to return briefly to the issue of religious persecution in Tibet and share the accounts of a monk and nun I

did speak to extensively in Bodhgaya. Their stories are examples of what religious persecution means on a personal level, and are set in the context of incidents reported in the international press and this year's State Department reports on religious persecution and human rights.

During a 6-week period in the summer of 2001, Chinese work teams demolished some 3,000 homes and meditation huts at Larung Gar, a remote monastic community in eastern Tibet. The encampment was believed to have had between seven and 8,000 monks and nuns in residence. Larung Gar was remarkable for its teacher, its level of scholarship, its students that included some 1,000 Chinese monks, and the high level of scholarship afforded to nuns.

In Bodhgaya, I met a young nun from Larung Gar. In July of last year, Chinese officials told her that she could no longer stay in her home and must leave within a few days. She was then spending a good deal of time in a nearby village caring for destitute nuns who had earlier been expelled from Larung Gar. She returned one day to find her home destroyed. Unlike hundreds of other newly expelled nuns who were then wandering around this remote area, she had a friend in another monastic institution at Yachen, some 3 days drive away. She stayed with her friend through the summer and she studied with her teachers.

In September, Chinese work teams arrived at Yachen monastery. They passed through the encampment painting a large Chinese letter "chai" on the front of many homes. I think we actually have one of those here. They affixed posters on the monastery's main prayer hall that read "monks and nuns who have had chai painted on their homes must demolish them by a certain date. Otherwise teams will demolish them and fine, levy a fine of 200 yuan that will be collected." Left with no alternative for continuing a religious education, the young nun made the painful decision to leave her sisters, her teachers and her homeland. She made the dangerous flight from Tibet into the relative safety of Kathmandu and then later into India after encountering many, many horrible moments and bribes and great insecurity.

The monk who I spoke about also came from Larung Gar. When the work teams arrived, he had nearly completed a 10-year course of study and was preparing to teach. Even though he was very young, he was accomplished in study and meditation, meaning that he had both the intellectual and spiritual means necessary to be a teacher or a "khenpo." This particular monk was not expelled and, in fact, received an identity card from the "Democratic Management Committee" encroached at Larung Gar that provides him resident status.

But the situation had changed too much at Larung Gar. First and most importantly, Khenpo Jigme Phutsok, an extraordinary lama, the senior lama at Larung Gar, very charismatic, and perhaps the most significant teacher remaining in Tibet, had been forced to leave. Second, the body of monastics had been shattered. On a scale that had not been witnessed since the Cultural Revolution, in a period of 3 months, the population of Larung Gar was reduced from 8,000 to 1,000 monks and 400 nuns. This young monk reluctantly left Larung Gar and soon after Tibet, because the three elements essential to his practice—the "Buddha," embodied

for him by Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok, the “sangha” or the monastic community, and the “dharma” or the transmission of the teachings—had been irrevocably desecrated at Larung Gar.

Both the monk and the nun asked me to never use their names, not for fear for themselves, but because they have family in Tibet. And the Chinese watch everything that is said about them, as we all well know. If I were to mention their names in this context, the families of this monk and nun would clearly be under surveillance and would have great hardship.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you for your time and for the continued efforts on behalf of the Tibetan people. But I also want to recommend a book. There are segments of the Tibetan population exiled that in my view still need special consideration. I hope that Congress can find the time some possible way to address their needs—among these are several thousand Tibetan veterans. I don’t know if you know this story, but during the years of the uprising in 1959 when 80,000 Tibetans left along with the Dalai Lama, there was in fact an armed uprising that was supported and trained by the CIA. Among these were several thousand Tibetan veterans who worked with the CIA and the CIA supported their campaign in Tibet. Their stories are vividly explained in this book, *Orphan of the Cold War*, by Ken Knaus. He is a retired CIA operative. It is really an extraordinary book. I think we should make sure all of you have this just to leaf through. You get some idea of the ongoing involvement from the U.S. side.

I want to thank you all very much. It has been a great pleasure and a great honor for me to be here. I commend you again for allowing this to happen. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Gere follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RICHARD GERE, CHAIRMAN, INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your invitation to discuss Tibet with the International Relations Committee. It is a particular honor to follow Undersecretary Paula Dobriansky, who has from the beginning of her tenure as Tibet Coordinator shown competence and clarity on this issue. I am also honored to share this occasion with the Special Envoy of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, my dear friend, Lodi Gyari.

I would like to focus my remarks on the issue of religious freedom in Tibet and on troubling developments facing new Tibetan refugees, nearly half of whom are monks and nuns.

In January, I traveled as a religious pilgrim to Bodhgaya, India, the spiritual birthplace of Buddhism. There I joined the greater part of the Tibetan exile population to receive the *Kalachakra* initiation, one of the most significant Buddhist ritual teachings, from His Holiness the Dalai Lama. An estimated 150,000 Tibetans were present at Bodhgaya, along with another 50,000 pilgrims from Bhutan, Nepal, and other countries.

Many of the Tibetans were recent refugees having made the perilous journey from Tibet, over the Himalayas, through Nepal and, finally, to India. All of those Tibetans who walked, hid and ran their way around Chinese and Nepalese border guards came to see His Holiness the Dalai Lama, their aging leader whom they respectfully refer to as *Yeshe Norbu*, or the Wish-Fulfilling Jewel.

In Bodhgaya, I spoke to many monks and nuns who shared familiar stories of religious persecution in Tibet. Tibetans are still forbidden by law to worship His Holiness the Dalai Lama, including the display of his photograph on their altars. Strict limits imposed by the Chinese authorities on the number of monks and nuns in monasteries prohibit entrance before the age of 18 and require expulsion after the age of 60; effectively cutting out the important learning and teaching times in a monastic’s life.

Two Tibetan monastic centers, in particular, were targets of massive destruction and expulsions in recent months. Both were reported in the international press. I

met several monks and nuns from these centers and will come back to their accounts at the end of my testimony.

The *Kalachakra* ritual represents a very special form of blessing. According to religious tradition, the *Kalachakra* has been taught in Tibet for 1,000 years, although at a drastically reduced scale since His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 1959 flight into exile. For Tibetan pilgrims who traveled from inside Tibet, the gathering at Bodhgaya was an awesome opportunity to receive from His Holiness the Dalai Lama one of the most important foundational teachings in Tibetan Buddhism.

Incredibly, less than one hour into the days-long teaching, His Holiness was forced to suspend his prayers due to illness and exhaustion.

Because of the central role His Holiness plays in the struggle of the Tibetan people to regain their freedoms, I feel it is especially important as we examine the situation in Tibet to consider for a moment the effect of that cancellation on the crowd of nearly 200,000 in Bodhgaya. I can tell you that rumors of the causes and extent of His Holiness's illness spread rapidly, at times hysterically, through the crowd, and were attributed to political as well as spiritual machinations. There was confusion and great concern, and extreme displays of emotion.

Although I understand that His Holiness is now completely recovered and is taking a well-deserved rest, his recent illness and the reaction it provoked points to a more urgent need for some resolution or movement towards resolving the issue of Tibet.

We are well aware that it is through His Holiness the Dalai Lama's leadership that the Tibetan struggle has remained non-violent. This is not to say that I believe Tibetans are otherwise inclined or able to take up arms against their Chinese oppressors. The extent of the Chinese control apparatus in place throughout Tibet makes such action unrealistic. For example, we know that any Tibetan in Tibet who raises his or her fist in the air and shouts "long live His Holiness the Dalai Lama" is, in a matter of minutes, converged upon by the People's Armed Police. In spite of China's efforts to forcibly control the Tibetan people, the real force that keeps them in check is the understanding that to act out violently would dishonor His Holiness. Such is the depth of their love and respect for him.

Ironically, China's propaganda machine has targeted the religious authority of His Holiness the Dalai Lama with its most vituperative rhetoric. China's leaders appear blind to the recognition that His Holiness and his teachings, which promote the development of an ethic of peace and tolerance, are the greatest hope for ultimate stability in Tibet.

I ask members of this committee to use their considerable influence to urge the Chinese leadership to reconsider their strategies in Tibet and to begin meaningful dialogue with His Holiness the Dalai Lama or his representatives in order to find a peaceful solution.

There is a second area where I believe the U.S. Government must act with greater sensitivity and dispatch—China's apparent growing influence in Nepal. I urge Chairman Gilman to consider convening a hearing of the South Asia and Middle East Subcommittee on this alliance, its impact for the region, including Tibet, and steps the United States might take to bolster Nepal's fragile democracy.

The Kingdom of Nepal, its government and people have been rocked by tragedy. The Maoist rebels are on a murderous rampage that is spreading from the remote interior to more populated areas, and the government has imposed a state of emergency. Reports from Nepal describe tremendous unease among the population. In the midst of this tense situation, evidence suggests that Chinese diplomats have begun to play hardball with the Nepal government on the issue of Tibetan refugees.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to share with the committee some findings of a report the International Campaign for Tibet will be releasing soon. The report describes the increasingly inhospitable situation for Tibetans in Nepal. Among its findings are:

- increased incidences of *refoulements* at the Nepal-Tibet border;
- a clampdown on Tibetans without official papers in long-established refugee settlements;
- the arrests of Tibetan students voluntarily repatriating to Tibet after the completion of their studies in India;
- a new restrictive attitude with regard to Tibetan cultural and religious events, including not allowing the photograph of His Holiness to be displayed during public gatherings; and
- the rise of hostile youth groups with apparent ties to the Chinese Embassy in Kathmandu.

Since the U.N High Commissioner for Refugees opened an office in Kathmandu and began counting Tibetan refugees in 1993, there has been a steady flow of about 2,500 arrivals in Nepal each year. This year, that number was 1,381, down by one thousand from last year, and roughly half of the average tally. In fact, with the Kalachakra scheduled for January in Bodhgaya, we had anticipated a considerable spike in the number of new arrivals. What happened?

While the impact of the Maoist insurgency has created very dangerous conditions in areas of Nepal that Tibetan refugees traverse, the International Campaign for Tibet believes that the reduced refugee flow principally results from a new understanding between the Chinese and Nepalese governments. This understanding manifests itself as:

- increased Chinese mountain border posts along the Nangpa-la pass, the escape route most frequently used by Tibetans;
- the greater inclination among Nepalese police to hand over Tibetan refugees to Chinese border guards, rather than to abide by the verbal agreement between the Nepal government and the UNHCR that provides for the safe-transit of Tibetan refugees through Nepal to India;
- denied or curtailed access for the UNHCR to border areas where it had systematically trained Nepalese police in safe-transit procedures; and
- an unresponsive Home Ministry to Tibetan refugee concerns.

Increasingly, Tibetan refugees can no longer count on the protection of the UNHCR or the willingness of the Nepal government to allow their safe passage. I urge the Committee to make inquiries of the U.S. Ambassador in Kathmandu, Nepalese authorities, and the UNHCR concerning the modalities of returning to what had been a crucial solution for Tibetans seeking freedom in exile. I would also respectfully request that the U.S. Government encourage the UNHCR in Kathmandu to be vigilant and proactive in carrying out their protective duties concerning Tibetans refugees. Finally, I would ask that the appropriate congressional committee explore the possibility of the United States providing asylum to Tibetans, which could lessen the stress on the Nepali and Indian governments.

At this time I would like to return briefly to the issue of religious persecution in Tibet and share the accounts of a monk and nun I met in Bodhgaya. Their stories are examples of what religious persecution means on a personal level, and are set in the context of incidents reported in the international press and this year's State Department reports on religious persecution and human rights.

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In Bodhgaya, I met a young nun from Larung Gar. In July of last year, Chinese officials told her that she could no longer stay in her home and must leave within a few days. She was then spending a good deal of time in a nearby village caring for destitute nuns who had earlier been expelled from Larung Gar. She returned one day to find her home destroyed. Unlike hundreds of other newly expelled nuns who were then wandering around this remote area, she had a friend at another monastic institution at Yachen, some three days drive away. She stayed with her friend through the summer and studied with her teachers.

In September, Chinese work teams arrived at Yachen monastery. They passed through the encampment painting a large Chinese letter "chai" on the front of many homes. "Chai" means demolish. They affixed posters on the monastery's main prayer hall, that read, "monks and nuns who have had 'chai' painted on their homes, must demolish them by a certain date. Otherwise, Chinese work teams will demolish them and a fine of 200 yuan will be collected." Left with no alternative for continuing her religious education, this young nun made the painful decision to leave her sisters, her teachers and her homeland. She made the dangerous flight from Tibet and arrived safely in Kathmandu in November.

The monk whose story I would like to share, also came from Larung Gar. When the work teams arrived, he had nearly completed a 10-year course of study and was preparing to teach. Even though he was young, he was accomplished in study and meditation, meaning that he had both the intellectual and spiritual empowerments necessary to be a teacher, or "khenpo". This particularly monk was not expelled and, in fact, received an identity card from the "Democratic Management Committee" at Larung Gar that provided him residence status.

But the situation had changed too much at Larung Gar. First and most importantly, Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok, the senior lama at Larung Gar, and perhaps the most significant teacher remaining in Tibet, had been forced to leave. Second, the body of monastics had been shattered. On a scale that had not been witnessed since the Cultural Revolution, in a period of three months, the population at Larung Gar was reduced from 8,000 to 1,000 monks and 400 nuns. This young monk reluctantly left Larung Gar, and soon after Tibet, because the three elements essential to his religious practice—the *Buddha*, embodied for him by Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok, the *sangha* or the monastic community, and the *dharma* or the transmission of the teachings—had been irrevocably desecrated at Larung Gar.

Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the International Campaign for Tibet, I thank you for your time and ask you to continue your efforts on behalf of the Tibetan people. Unless the situation in Tibet improves, the influx of Tibetan refugees will certainly continue and we will look to you for further support.

Indeed, there are segments of the Tibetan population in exile that, in my view, still need special consideration and I hope the Congress can find some way to address. Among these are the several thousand Tibetan “veterans” who worked with the CIA when they had a Tibet campaign. Their story is vividly explained in the book, *Orphans of the Cold War* by Ken Knaus, a former CIA operative, which I commend to this Committee as a fascinating and informative read.

Chairman HYDE. Thank you. We will now entertain questions if the panel has the endurance. First, I plead with my colleagues to be brief. Don't exceed 5 minutes because I would like all of you to get an opportunity. We may have a vote soon which breaks us up more or less permanently.

So with that in mind, Mr. Lantos.

Mr. LANTOS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And let me thank these three extraordinary witnesses. This was one of the highest quality hearings that I recall attending in my congressional career. These are not canned preparations, these are passionate and thoughtful fighters for human rights and we are deeply in your debt.

Let me just respond briefly to some of the issues raised and stay strictly within your 5-minute time frame, Mr. Chairman.

I was very pleased that the President and the Under Secretary of State, Secretary Dobriansky, raised these issues during their visit with the Chinese authorities. Let me just say that many of us in Congress do this routinely and I encourage all of my colleagues in Congress not to have any contact with Chinese authorities without raising the issue of Tibet and religious freedom in general.

I was very disturbed by Richard's comments about what is happening in Nepal, and I pledge to you that I will be in touch with our Ambassador in Kathmandu tomorrow and I will do my utmost to see to it that this minimal protection which used to be available is restored. I also will contact the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to be sure that their office in Kathmandu does the things it needs to do.

I would like to raise the issue of how we can use the Olympics to improve the conditions in Tibet and the role of His Holiness. As you know, I lost my fight to deny China the 2008 Olympics for a whole variety of reasons. So the Olympics will now be held in China just 6 years from now. I think this gives us an opportunity in the preparation for those Olympics not just by athletes but by national Olympic committees, the political leadership of the free world, to see to it that we insist that by the time the Olympics begin, at the moment the flame arrives in Beijing, there will have been a significant break-through on Tibet. Because unless this happens, I for one, and I am sure there will be hundreds, if not thousands, joining me, will make the opening of the Beijing Olympics

a singularly embarrassing episode for the People's Republic of China. That is not our goal. Our goal is to see to it that the very modest goals, the very modest objectives of His Holiness the Dalai Lama are realized. And nothing would please me more than paying tribute to the new Chinese leadership if, in fact, they move in this direction.

But the Chinese government, and I am sure their representatives are present in this hearing room, needs to understand that some of us consider the improvement in the conditions of the Tibetan people, the opening of a dialogue with His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the creation of religious and cultural freedom in Tibet far more important than the Olympic games in Beijing in 2008. And we will not miss a single opportunity of calling the attention of the world's civilized people to the incongruity between the enormous achievements of the Chinese in economic and other areas and their continuing backward and retrograde view toward Tibet. Thank you very much.

Chairman HYDE. Thank the gentleman. The gentlelady from the state of Virginia, Mrs. Davis.

Mrs. DAVIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under Secretary Dobriansky, could you tell us how actively the Bush Administration is pressing Beijing to allow us to open a consulate in, I think Lhasa?

Ms. DOBRIANSKY. Well, we have certainly had a broad range of discussions with the Chinese in the context of our human rights dialogue. The Tibetan Policy Act, in fact, does specifically call for the establishment of a consulate in Lhasa. Let me put it this way, that we certainly endorse and embrace the very thrust of the act, but at the same time there is executive prerogative and privilege in terms of how one executes the act's recommendations.

At this juncture, this is something that we have not raised—to answer your question specifically, we have not raised directly—but we do look at every aspect of the act and the recommendations that have been set forth therein.

Mrs. DAVIS. Is the Administration of the United States prepared to take strong action if Beijing doesn't release the 11 year old who was 6 when he was taken by the Chinese authorities?

Ms. DOBRIANSKY. Let me tell you, I referenced it in my comments, not only in terms of the Panchen Lama, but for all of those who I did not mention in my statement, we have tried to use every opportunity to raise these cases, not only in the human rights dialogue which we reopened and reinitiated last fall, but also during the recent visit of President Bush to Beijing. There was a discussion specifically of human rights cases which have been unresolved, including this one.

But let me go further. As I said in my statement, and I would like to underscore this point, it is not the issue of one or two releases. We have stated very clearly that this is an issue about not just one case being resolved, not a second case being resolved, this is an issue about change—a change of approach that would affect the lives of all of those who want to preserve their culture, who want to preserve their language, who want to have religious freedom.

If I may add, too, that, you know, when President Bush was in Beijing, not only privately but also publicly, he spoke very passionately about the importance of religious freedom.

Mrs. DAVIS. I am not sure who this question is for, any of you can answer it, if you know the answer. What impact is the Chinese government promoting economic development in Tibet—is there a strong impact on the Tibetan people?

Mr. GYARI. Thank you for having asked that question. In fact, in my remarks I have dealt with that. Yes, Chinese, as a matter of fact, this moment are making huge propaganda about their intentions to finally pay some attention to Tibet, which I think, as the under secretary has said, is one of the most neglected and one of the most backward areas. But now this huge economic program that the Chinese are beginning to undertake, in my mind, is going to further alienate the Tibetans.

For example, this includes a huge project where they want to build a railway line all the way to Lasa. The Chinese President himself is on public record to say that it was a political decision, it was not an economic decision, which clearly means that we are very much wanted, because where we were already being outnumbered, this railway line when it is built will have the Chinese capability to further reduce the population ratio.

And also we are talking about stability of not only China but the whole region. I need not remind the Members, I am sure, for example, the relations between India and China, which fortunately in the last several years has been rather quite friendly, can have a reverse effect. This will give China the possibility to rapidly deploy literally thousands of troops to the plateau of Tibet.

Also we do know that Chinese in the past have always used railway lines to transport nuclear missiles. So therefore we have yes, sir, a great deal of worry.

At the same time, we know that the Tibetan people inside Tibet need to be empowered. So therefore we appreciate very much the Congress and some Members who have taken some interest in helping Tibetans. We welcome that. But we are very much concerned about China's policies in that regard.

Chairman HYDE. The gentlelady from California, Ms. Watson.

Ms. WATSON. I have not been in Tibet, but I certainly have been in China. And I repeat my colleague's concern about the diplomatic strategy in the long term for dealing with this issue. I am reminded of other situations throughout the Far East, maybe the Under Secretary can explain. What is the long range diplomatic strategy that we can use to address the Tibetan question?

Ms. DOBRIANSKY. Well, if I understand your question, first, we are in pursuit—and I hope it is not a long term but a short term pursuit, meaning a goal with much quicker results. We are advocating diplomatically in our discussions with the Chinese the importance of engaging in dialogue with the Dalai Lama or his representatives. We have tried to indicate quite clearly that this is not only in the interest of the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan people in terms of preserving their language, their culture, religion, but this is truly in the interest of China for the long term. And for the short term, if I may say.

We have talked about the concern about instability, whether it is a result of economic circumstances, or whether it is a result of other measures that have been imposed in Tibet. The holding of dialogue and the conduct of discussions would truly reap, I think, a better understanding of and a peaceful solution to the situation in Tibet. So, that would be, I would say, the cornerstone of our strategic approach.

Ms. WATSON. Are we making headway?

Ms. DOBRIANSKY. No. Before you came, I addressed this a bit and unfortunately even though these issues have in fact been raised, they have been raised in the context of various meetings that we have had at high levels, including the President's recent visits to China, but there hasn't been a response. I want to underscore again what I think is most significant here is that it is in the mutual interest of both and for future stability and peace in China and in Tibet.

Chairman HYDE. Madam Secretary, there is a vote on, final passage of an important bill, and so if I could interrupt and express the thanks of the Committee for your time, your contribution. It has been very helpful, very instructive. You have started in motion something that will gather momentum, I assure you. We thank you very much. Committee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:27 p.m., the Committee was adjourned.]

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